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NESA M 83-10352

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Bombings in Kuwait; 12 December 1983
Information as of 1200, 15 December 1983

Casualties and Damage

- All Americans alive; minor injuries to some.

- Five killed at US Embassy; four were Foreign Service Nationals or contract employees; fifth was suicide truck driver. At least one killed in five other bombings.

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Responsibility

- "Islamic Jihad" claims responsibility for Kuwaiti bombings. Little is known about group; may be cover name for Iranian agents or Lebanese Shias connected with Iran.

  -- Same group claimed responsibility for previous attacks on US, French, and Israeli targets in Lebanon, including US Embassy (April) and US and French MNF headquarters (October).

- Suicide driver of truck at US Embassy positively identified as Iraqi Shia, resident in Kuwait. Driver believed to belong to "Hizb al-Dawa," a Shia fundamentalist umbrella organization in Iraq that is affiliated with "Islamic Jihad" and believed to be controlled from Tehran.

  -- Kuwaiti officials have arrested other suspects, all Shias.

- Kuwaiti officials blame Iran for attacks; believe their principal goal was to destabilize Kuwait, causing collapse of government, and were only secondarily aimed at US and French interests.

- Iranians, Syrians, and extremist Palestinians have been linked to previous threats against US Embassy in Kuwait. We cannot rule out Syrian involvement--Tehran may have been prime planner of Kuwait attacks, but they also served Syrian interests.

New Threats

- [redacted] Syrians and Iranians may target US interests in Europe, specifically Athens, Paris, or London. 25X1

- Sophistication of the closely timed bombings in Kuwait and apparent ease with which they were carried out underscore vulnerability of other moderate Arab governments in the Gulf and Western facilities there.

Related Developments

- All Arab Gulf states have condemned Kuwait bombings and offered increased security to US Embassy facilities; Kuwaiti officials report that Iran, Syria, and Libya have not condemned bombings, either publicly or privately.

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SUBJECT: Bombing of Kuwait, 12 December 1983

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